

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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A SERIAL STORY BY THE AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I. LIFE AT WESTHOPE.

"TEA, my lady!"

"Very well. Tell Lady Caroline—oh, here you are! I was just sending to tell you that tea was ready. I saw you come in from your ride just before the curtains were drawn."

"Did you? Then you must have seen a pretty draggetailed spectacle. I've caked my habit with mud and torn it into shreds, and generally distinguished myself."

"Did Mr. Biscoe blush?"

"Not a bit of it. Mr. Biscoe's a good specimen of a hard-riding parson, and seemed to like me the better the muddier and more torn I became. By the way, his wife is coming to dinner, isn't she? so I must drop my flirtation with the rector, and be on my best behaviour."

"Caroline, you are too absurd; the idea of flirting with a man like that!"

"Well, then, why don't you provide some one better for me? I declare, Margaret, you are ignorant of the simplest duties of hospitality! I can't flirt with West, because he's my brother-in-law, for one reason, and because you mightn't like it perhaps, and because I mightn't care about it myself much. And there's no one else in the house who—Oh, by the way, I'll speak about that just now—who else is coming to dinner?"

"Some people from the barracks—Colonel Tapp and Mr. Frampton, the man who hunted through all those papers the other day to find the paragraph you asked him about, don't you know; a Mr. Boyd,

a good-looking fair-haired boy, with an eyeglass, one of the Ross-shire Boyds, who is reading somewhere in the neighbourhood with a tutor; the Biscoes, the Porters—people who live at those iron gates with the griffins which I showed you; and—I don't know—two or three others."

"Oh, heavens, what a cheerful prospect! I hate the army, and I detest good-looking boys with eyeglasses; and I've been all day with Mr. Biscoe, and I don't know the griffin people, nor the two or three others. Look here, Margaret, why don't you ask Mr. Joyce to dinner?"

"Mr. Joyce? I don't know—Good heavens, Caroline, you don't mean Lord Hetherington's secretary?"

"I do indeed, Margaret—why shouldn't I? He is quite nice and gentlemanly, and has charming eyes."

"Caroline, I wonder at your talking such nonsense. You ought to know me sufficiently—"

"And you ought to know me sufficiently to understand there's nothing on earth I detest like being bored. I shall be bored out of my life by any of the people you have mentioned, while I'm sure I should find some amusement in Mr. Joyce."

"You might probably find a great deal of amusement in Norton, the steward, or in William, my footman; but you would scarcely wish me to ask them to dinner?"

"I think not—not in William, at all events. There is a dull decorum about Mr. Norton which one might find some fun in bearing—"

"Caroline, be quiet; you are *impayable*! Are you really serious in what you say about Mr. Joyce?"

"Perfectly—why not? I had some talk with him in the library the other day, and found him most agreeable."

"Well, then, I will send and say we expect him; will that satisfy you?"

"No, certainly not! Seriously, Margaret, for one minute. You know that I was only in fun, and that it cannot matter one atom to me whether this young man is asked to join your party or not. Only, if you do ask him, don't send. You know the sort of message which the footman would deliver, no matter what formula had been entrusted to him; and I should be very sorry to think that Mr. Joyce, or any other gentleman, should be caused a mortification through any folly of mine."

"Perhaps you think I ought to go to him and offer him a verbal invitation?"

"Certainly, if you want him at all—I mean if you intend asking him to dinner. You'll be sure to find him in the library. Now I'm dying to get rid of this soaked habit and this clinging skirt! So I'm off to dress." And Lady Caroline Mansergh gave her sister a short nod, and left the room.

Left alone, Lady Hetherington took a few minutes to recover herself. Her pet sister Caroline had always been a spoiled child, and accustomed to have her own way in the old home, in her own house when she married Mr. Mansergh—the richest, idlest, kindest old gentleman that ever slept in St. Stephen's first, and in Glasnevin Cemetery scarcely more soundly afterwards—and generally everywhere since she had lost him. But she had been always remarkable for particularly sound sense, and had a manner of treating objectionably pushing people, which succeeded in keeping them at a distance, better even than the frigid hauteur which Lady Hetherington indulged in. The countess knew this, and, acknowledging it in her inmost heart, felt that she could make no great mistake in acceding to her sister's wishes. Moreover, she reflected, after all it was a mere small country-house dinner that day; there was no one expected about whose opinion she particularly cared; and as the man was domiciled in the house, was useful to Lord Hetherington, and was presentable, it was only right to show him some civility.

So, after leaving the drawing-room on her way to dress for dinner, Lady Hetherington crossed the hall to the library, and at the far end of the room saw Mr. Joyce at work, under a shaded lamp. She went straight up to him, and was somewhat amused at finding that he, either not hearing her entrance, or imagining that it was merely some servant with a message, never

raised his head, but continued grinding away at his manuscript.

"Mr. Joyce!" said her ladyship, slightly bending forward.

"Hey?" replied the scribe, in whose ear the tones, always haughty and imperious, however she might try to soften them, rang like a trumpet call. "I beg your pardon, Lady Hetherington," he added, rising from his seat; "I had no idea you were in the room."

"Don't disturb yourself, Mr. Joyce; I only looked in to say that we have a few friends coming to dinner to-night, and it will afford Lord Hetherington and myself much pleasure if you will join us."

"I shall be most happy," said Mr. Joyce. And then Lady Hetherington returned his bow, and he preceded her down the room and opened the door to let her pass.

"As if he'd been a squire of dames from his cradle," said her ladyship to herself. "The man has good hands, I noticed, and there was no awkwardness about him."

"What does this mean?" said Walter Joyce, when he reached his own room and was dressing for dinner. "These people have been more civil than I could have expected them to be to a man in my position, and Lord Hetherington especially has been kindness itself; but they have always treated me as what I am—'his lordship's secretary.' Whence this new recognition? One comfort is that, thanks to old Jack Byrne's generosity, I can make a decent appearance at their table. I laughed when he insisted on providing me with dress clothes, but he knew better. 'They can't do you any harm, my boy,' I recollect his saying, 'and they may do you some good;' and now I see how right he was. Fancy my going into society, and beginning at this phase of it! I wonder whether Marian would be pleased? I wonder—" And he sat down on the edge of his bed, and fell into a dreamy, abstracted state; the effect caused by Marian's last long letter was upon him yet. He had answered it strongly—far more strongly than he had ever written to her before—pointing out that, at the outset, they had never imagined that life's path was to be made smooth and easy to them; they had always known that they would have to struggle, and that it was specially unlike her to fold her hands and beg for the unattainable, simply because she saw it in the possession of other people. "She dared not tell him how little hope for the future, she had." That was a bad sign

indeed. In their last parting walk round the garden of the old school-house at Helmingham, she had hinted something of this, and he thought he had silenced her on the point; but her want of hope, her abnegation of interest, was now much more pronounced; and against such a feeling he inveighed with all the strength and power of his honest soul. If she gave in, what was to become of them, whose present discomforts were only made bearable by anticipation of the time when he would have her to share his lot?

"And after all, Marian," he had said in conclusion, "what does it all mean? This money for which you wish so much—I find the word studding every few lines of your letter—this splendour, luxury, comfort—call it by what name you will, what does it all mean? Who benefits by it? Not the old gentleman, who has passed his life in slaving for the acquisition of wealth! As I understand from you, his wife is dead, and his son almost estranged from him. Is this the end of it? If you could see his inmost heart, is he not pining for the woman who stood by his side during the conflict? and does he not feel the triumph empty and hollow without her to share it with him? Would he not sooner have his son's love, and trust, and confidence, than the conservatory, and the carriages, and the splendour on which you dwell so rapturously? If you could know all, you would learn that the happiest time of his life was when he was striving, in company with her he loved, and that the end now attained, however grand it may be, however above his original anticipations, is but poor and vain, now she is not there to share it with him. Oh, Marian, my heart's darling, think of this, and be assured of its truth! So long as we love each other, so long as the sincerity of that love gives us confidence in each other, all will be well, and it will be impossible to shut out hope. It is only when a shadow crosses that love, a catastrophe which seems impossible, but which we should pray God to avert, that hope can in the smallest degree diminish. Marian, my love, my life, think of this as I place it before you! We are both young, both gifted with health, and strength, and powers of endurance. If we fight the battle side by side, if we are not led away by envy and induced to fix the standard of our desires too high, we shall, we *must* succeed in attaining what we have so often hopefully discussed—the happiness of being all in all

to each other, and leading our lives together, 'for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part.' I confess I can imagine no greater bliss—can you?"

He had had no answer to this letter, but that had not troubled him much. He knew that Marian was not fond of correspondence, that in her last letter she had given a full account of her new life, and that she could have but little to say; and he was further aware that a certain feeling of pride would prevent her from too readily endorsing his comments on her views; that she agreed with those comments, or that they would commend themselves to her natural sound sense on reflection, he had no doubt; and he was content to await calmly the issue of events.

The party assembled were waiting the announcement of dinner in the library, and when Joyce entered the room Lord Hetherington left the rug where he had been standing with two other gentlemen, and, advancing towards his secretary, took his hand, and said: "I am glad her ladyship has persuaded you to come out of seclusion, Mr. Joyce! Too much—what is it?—books, and work, and that kind of thing, is—is—the dence, in point of fact!" And then his lordship went back to the rug, and Joyce having received a sufficiently distant bow from Lady Hetherington, retreated into a darkish corner of the room, into which the flickering firelight did not penetrate, and looked around him.

Lady Hetherington looked splendidly handsome, he thought. She was dressed in maroon-coloured velvet, lit up wonderfully in the firelight, which showed her classically-shaped head, and head-dress of velvet and black lace. Joyce had read much of Juno-looking women, but he had never realised the idea until he gazed upon that calm, majestic, imperious face, so clearly cold in outline, those large, solemnly-radiant eyes, that splendidly-moulded figure. The man who was bending over her chair as he addressed her, not deferentially, as Joyce felt that—not from her rank, but rather from her splendid beauty—she should be addressed, but on the contrary, rather flippantly, had a palpable curly wig, shaved cheeks, waxed moustache, and small white hands, which he rubbed gently together in front of him. He was Colonel Tapp, a Crimean hero, a very Paladin in war, but who had been worn by time, not into slovenry, but

into coxcombry. Mr. Biscoe, the rector of the parish, a big, broad-shouldered, bull-headed man, with clean-cut features, wholesome complexion, and breezy whiskers: excellent parson as well as good cross-country man, and as kind of heart as keen at sport, stood by her ladyship's side, and threw an occasional remark into the conversation. Joyce could not see Lady Caroline Mansergh, but he heard her voice coming from a recess on the far-side of the fireplace, and mingled with its bright, ringing Irish accent came the deep, growling bass of Captain Frampton, adjutant of the dépôt battalion, and a noted amateur singer. The two gentlemen chatting with Lord Hetherington on the rug were magnates of the neighbourhood, representatives of old county families. Mr. Boyd, a very good-looking young gentleman, with crisp wavy hair and pink-and-white complexion, was staring hard at nothing through his eye-glass, and wondering whether he could fasten one of his studs, which had come undone, without any one noticing him; and Mr. Biscoe was in conversation with a foxy-looking gentleman, with sunken eyes, sharp nose, and keen gleaming teeth, in whom Joyce recognised Mr. Gould, Lord Hetherington's London agent, who was in the habit of frequently running down on business matters, and whose room was always kept ready for him.

Dinner announced and general movement of the company. At the table Joyce found himself seated by Lady Caroline Mansergh, her neighbour on the other side being Captain Frampton. After bowing and smiling at Mr. Joyce, Lady Caroline said:

"Now, Captain Frampton, continue, if you please!"

"Let me see!" said the captain, a good soldier and a good singer, but not overburdened with more brains than are necessary for these professions—"let me see! Gad—shamed to say, Lady Car'line, forgot what we were talkin' of!"

"Mr. Chennery—you remember now?"

"Yas, yas, 'course, thousand pardons! Well, several people heard him at Carabas House, think him wonderful!"

"A tenor, you say?"

"Pure tenor, one of the richest, purest tenor voices ever heard! Man's fortune's made—if he only behaves himself!"

"How do you mean, 'behaves himself,' Captain Frampton?" asked Lady Caroline, raising her eyebrows.

"Well, I mean sassiety, and all that kind

of thing, Lady Caroline! Man not accustomed to sassiety might, as they say, put his foot in it!"

"I see," said Lady Caroline, with an assumption of gravity. "Exactly! and that would indeed be dreadful. But is this gentleman not accustomed to society?"

"Not in the least; and in point of fact not a gentleman, so far as I'm led to understand. Father's a shepherd; outdoor labouring something down at Lord Westonhanger's place in Wiltshire; boy was apprenticed to a stonemason, but people staying at the house heard of his singing, sent for him, and Lord Westonhanger was so charmed with his voice, had him sent to Italy and taught. That's the story!"

"Surely one that reflects great credit on all concerned," said Lady Caroline. "But I yet fail to see why Mr. Chennery should not behave himself!"

"Well, you see, Lady Caroline, Carabas House, and that sort of thing—people he'll meet there, you know, different from anything he's ever seen before."

"But he can but be a gentleman, Captain Frampton. If he were a prince, he could be no more!"

"No, exactly, course not; but pardon me, that's just it, don't you see, the difficulty is for the man to be a gentleman."

"Not at all; not the slightest difficulty!"

And here Lady Caroline almost imperceptibly turned a little toward Joyce. "If Mr. Chennery is thrown into different society from that to which he has been hitherto accustomed, and is at all nervous about his reception or his conduct in it, he has merely to be natural and just as he always has been, to avoid any affectation, and he cannot fail to please. The art which he possesses, and the education he has received, are humanising influences, and he certainly contributes more than the average quota toward the enjoyment of what people call society."

Whether Captain Frampton was unconvinced by the argument, whether he found a difficulty in pursuing it, or whether he had by this time realised the fact that the soup was of superior quality, and worth paying attention to, are moot points; at all events, the one thing certain was, that he bowed and slightly shrugged his shoulders, and relapsed into silence, while Lady Caroline, with a half smile of victory, which somehow seemed to include Walter Joyce in its expanding ripple, replied across the table to a polite query of Mr. Biscoe's in reference to their recent ride.

She certainly was very beautiful! Joyce had thought so before, as he had caught transient glimpses of her flitting about the house; but now that he had, unnoticed and unseen, the opportunity of quietly studying her, he was astonished at her beauty. Her face was very pale, with an impertinent little nose, and deep violet eyes, and a small rosebud of a mouth; but perhaps her greatest charm lay in her hair, which lay in heavy thick chesnut clumps over her white forehead. Across it she wore the daintiest bit of precious lace, white lace, the merest apology for a cap, two long lappels pinned together by a diamond brooch, while the huge full clump at the back, unmistakably real, was studded with small diamond stars. She was dressed in a blue satin gown, set off with a profusion of white lace, and on her arm she wore a large heavy gold bracelet. Walter Joyce found himself gazing at her in an odd indescribable way. He had never seen anything like her, never realised such a combination of beauty, set off by the advantages of dress and surroundings. Her voice too, so bright and clear, and ringing, and her manner to him—to him? Was it not to him that she had really addressed these words of advice, although they were surely said in apparent reply to Captain Frampton's comments? If that were so, it was indeed kind of Lady Caroline, true, noble-hearted kindness; he must write and tell Marian of it.

He was thinking of this, and had in his mind a picture, confused, indeed, but full of small details which had a strange interest for him, and a vivid sadness too, of the contrast between the scene of which he formed at this moment a part, and those familiar to himself and to Marian. He was thinking of the homely simple life of the village, of the dear dead friend, so much a better man, so much a truer gentleman than any of these people, who were of so much importance in a world where he had been of so little; of the old house, the familiar routine of life, not wearisome with all its sameness, the sweetness of his first love. He was thinking of the splendour, the enervating, bewildering luxury of his present surroundings, among which he sat so strange, so solitary, save for the subtle reassuring influence, the strange, unaccountable support and something like companionship in the tones of that fair and gracious lady's voice, in the light of her swift, flitting smile in which he thought he read an admission that the company was

little more to her taste than to his, had as little in common with her intellectual calibre as with his. He could not have told how she conveyed this impression to him, if he had tried to explain his feelings to any third person; he could not explain it to himself, when he thought over the events of the evening, alone in his room, which was a dingy apartment when compared with the rest of the house, but far better than any which had ever called him master; but there it was, strong and strangely attractive, mingling with the sights and sounds around him, and with the dull dead pain at his heart which had been caused by Marian's letter, and which he had never quite succeeded in conquering. There were unshed, but not unseen tears in his eyes, and a slight tremulous motion in his lips, which one pair of eyes at the table, quick, with all their languor, keen, with all their disdainful slowness, did not fail to see. The owner of those beautiful eyes did not quite understand, could not "fathom" the meaning of the sudden glitter in his; "idle tears," indeed, on such an occasion, and in such company; but, with the fine unfailing instinct of a coquette, she discerned, more clearly than Walter Joyce himself had felt it, that she counted for something in the origin and meaning of those unshed tears, and of that nervous twitching.

Lady Caroline had just removed her eyes with well feigned carelessness from Walter's face, after a covert glance, apparently casual, but in reality searching, in order to effect which she had leaned forward, and plucked some geranium leaves from a bouquet near her on the table; and Walter was removing himself still farther from the scene around, into the land of reverie, when a name spoken by Mr. Gould, and making an odd accidental harmony with his thoughts, fixed his wandering attention.

"What sort of weather had you in Hampshire?" asked Lord Hetherington, in one of those irksome pauses usually selected by some individual who is at once commonplace and good-natured to distinguish himself by uttering an inane sentiment, or asking an awkward question.

"Awful, I should fancy," said Lady Hetherington, in the most languid of her languid tones. "Awful, if it has been like the weather here. Were you really obliged to travel, Mr. Gould? I can't fancy any one going anywhere in such weather."

"As it happened," said Mr. Gould, with a rather impatient glance towards her lady-

ship—for he could not always smile complacently when she manifested her normal unconsciousness that anybody could have anything to do, not entirely dependent on his or her own pleasure and convenience—"as it happened, I had not to go. A few days after I told his lordship the particulars of the sale of land, I had a letter informing me that the matter was all off for the present."

"Indeed!" said Lord Hetherington, "a doosed bore for Langley, isn't it? He has been wanting to pick up something in that neighbourhood for a long time. But the sale will ultimately come off, I suppose, unless some one buys the land over Langley's head by private contract."

"There's no fear of that, I think," said Mr. Gould; "but I took precautions. I should not like Sir John to lose the slice off Woolgreaves he wants. The place is in a famous hunting country, and the plans are settled upon—like Sir John, isn't it?—for his hunting box."

"I don't know that part of Hampshire at all," said Lord Hetherington, delighted at finding a subject on which he could induce one of his guests to talk, without his being particularly bound to listen. "Very rich and rural, isn't it? Why didn't the—ah, the person—sell the land Langley wanted there?"

"For rather a melancholy reason," replied Mr. Gould, while Lady Hetherington and the others looked bored by anticipation. Rather inconsiderate and bad taste of Mr. Gould to tell about "melancholy reasons" in a society which only his presence and that of the secretary rendered at all "mixed." But Mr. Gould, who was rather full of the subject, and who had the characteristic—so excellent in a man of business in business hours, but a little tiresome in social moments—of believing that nothing could equal in interest his clients' affairs, or in importance his clients themselves, went on, quite regardless of the strong apathy in the face of the countess. "The letter which prevented my going down to Woolgreaves on the appointed day was written by a lady residing in the house, to inform me that the owner of the property, a Mr. Creswell, very well known in those parts, had lost his only son, and was totally unfit to attend to any business. The boy was killed, I understand, by a fall from his pony."

"Tom Creswell killed!" exclaimed Walter Joyce, in a tone which directed the attention of every one at the table to the "secretary."

"I beg your pardon," Joyce went on, "but will you kindly tell me all you know of this matter? I know Mr. Creswell, and I knew this boy well. Are you sure of the fact of his death?"

The paleness of Walter's face, the intensity of his tone, held Lady Caroline's attention fixed upon him. How handsome he was, and the man could evidently feel too! How nice it would be to make him feel, to see the face pale, and to hear the voice deepen, like that, for her. It would be quite *new*. She had any amount of flirtation always at hand, whenever she chose to summon its aid in passing the time, but feeling did not come at call, and she had never had much of that given her. These were the thoughts of only a moment, flashing through her mind before Mr. Gould had time to answer Joyce's appeal.

"I am sorry I mentioned the fact at so inappropriate a time," said Mr. Gould, "but still more sorry that there is no doubt whatever of its truth. Indeed, I think I can show you the letter." Mr. Gould wore a dress coat, of course, but he could not have dined comfortably, if he had not transferred a mass of papers from his morning-coat to its pockets. This mass he extricated with some difficulty, and selecting one, methodically endorsed with the date of its receipt, from the number, he handed it to Walter.

Lady Hetherington was naturally shocked at the infringement of the *bienséances* caused by this unfortunate incident, and was glancing from Mr. Gould to Mr. Joyce, from one element of the "mixture" in the assembled society to the other, with no pleasant expression of countenance—when Lady Caroline came to the rescue, with gracefulness, deftness, lightness, all her own, and by starting an easy unembarrassed conversation with the gentleman opposite to her, in which she skilfully included her immediate neighbours, she dissipated all the restraints which had temporarily fallen upon the party. Something interesting to the elevated minds of the party, something different from the unpleasantness of a boy's being killed, whom nobody knew anything about, at a place which did not belong to anybody,—and the character of the dinner party, momentarily threatened, was triumphantly retrieved.

Walter saw that the letter which Mr. Gould handed him was in Marian's writing. It contained an announcement of the calamity which had occurred, and an intimation that Mr. Creswell could not attend to any matters of business at present. That was all. Walter read the brief letter with

sincere concern, commiseration for the childless rich man, and also with the thrill, half of curiosity, half of painless jealousy, with which one regards the familiar and beloved handwriting, when addressed, however formally, to another. He returned the letter to Mr. Gould, with a simple expression of thanks, and sat silent. No one noticed him. Every one had forgotten the dismal occurrence about somebody whom nobody knew, down in some place that did not belong to anybody. He had time to think unquestioned.

"I wonder she has not written to me. The accident occurred four days ago," he thought. "I suppose she has too much to do for them all. God bless her, she will be their best comfort."

Though unversed in the minor arts and smaller tactics of society, Walter was not so dull or awkward as to be ignorant of the skill and kindness with which Lady Caroline had acted on his behalf. When the ladies were to leave the room, as she passed him, their eyes met, and each looked at the other steadily. In her glance there was undisguised interest, in his—gratitude.

RABBIT SKIN.

THERE was a time when I was ignorant enough to wonder why a ragged little urchin with the London cry of "Any rabbit skins to-day, marm?" distressed himself to shout so often at my area steps. I then thought that he was a seller, not a buyer, and it had perplexed me to discover what use persons in private life could possibly find for the article he seemed to be offering for sale, a string of which he wore suspended about his youthful neck. That was crass ignorance, but now that I know better, ever so much better, I go about doubting whether one man in fifty thousand of all those I see about the world could give anything but the vaguest answer to the question. What's done with the rabbit's skin? Shall this state of ignorance continue? These disclosures are the answer to it.

The elementary fact is, of course, this. All hare skins and rabbit skins disappear. They are bought at our doors, taken away and never sold again. Nobody ever bought fur warranted as real coney, or met with rabbit's fur as such, in any other shape; and the only avowed form of hare skin is that sold by chemists as a "Hare-skin Chest Protector." I solved the mystery by getting an introduction to a wholesale skinner upon the south side of the Thames.

"Yes, sir, we perform the skinning part of the business," said he, as he led me through a dry and rather spacious warehouse, on one side of which, stowed away in racks, stood some hun-

dreds of brown-paper bags, like so many half peck loaves.

"Contain rabbit wool, those, sir; ready for the market. Worth at the present moment six shillings per pound. That is, the best sort. During the summer months the wild rabbit is let alone, and at that season his coat is like the tame rabbit's, coarse and thin, what, indeed, we of the trade calls 'stagey.' About November my gentleman puts off his summer dress and goes into a new and beautiful warm suit. Then it is that collectors go round, both in town and country, buying up the skins. Now, sir, you would say a skin is a skin, *see* say it is a 'whole,' or a 'half,' or a 'quarter,' or a 'rack,' or a 'sucker.' Suckers are skins of infant rabbits, and of little value. Eight racks are equal to one whole. The relative value of the others is told in their names. Wholes are worth from three shillings to three and sixpence a dozen. At a rough guess more than two thousand dozen of coney skins are cut in London in one day. There are country towns such as High Wycombe in Bucks, where the business is also followed. The wool is chiefly used in the manufacture of felt hats. Cloth also has been made from it. When the cutting used to be done by hand it was a very slow process, but it is now done by machinery. A good workman by hand labour would get through sixty or seventy skins in a day. A machine can be made to cut one hundred and twenty skins in an hour. We can't find skins enough to keep it always going. The average day's work of a machine is seventy dozen. Before the skin is fit for cutting it has to be prepared by the puller; but if you will follow me you may see the process."

A long broad flight of stairs conducted us to a workshop from whence there came wafted on a strong animal effluvium, the refrain of "Champagne Charley." The strain, but not the stink, died away as we entered. Sitting upon low benches were ranged seventy or eighty women, young, middle aged, and old, busily pulling. They were all in rags; but I learned that ragged gown and torn boots was the regular working costume, and that most of them had other and better clothing stowed away in a room hard by. The stamp of very low life was on the features of many, more especially among the elder ladies. While passing along their ranks, once or twice there was a confusion of smells, including something unmistakably suggestive of Old Tom. My conductor accounted for this presently, by informing me that, as it was only Tuesday, a good many of the hands had hardly got into working fettle yet, after keeping the feast of Saint Monday, whose shrines are the bars of public-houses. The air was bad enough if there had been no smell in it, for dust and fine particles of hair were floating all around and settling quietly upon the heads and shoulders of the labourers.

I directed my attention to a woman who had just received a bundle of work. She took up a skin turned inside out, as it had been torn from the back of the rabbit. With a sharp knife, such as may be found upon any leather-

cutter's counter, she briskly whipped off the feet (which are always left attached to the skin); slit the little arm-holes; then ran the blade up the neck and head. The skin now showed a tolerably even surface. After thus operating upon a large portion of the bundle, she caught up a piece of whiting, and where there were any signs of fat upon the flesh side of the skin rubbed it over therewith. Sometimes her work was hard and ridgy, from not having been properly stretched out while drying. In that case a pan of water and a hare's foot took the place of the whiting. She next picked up a skin, laid it upon her knee, slipping a string loop over it, and under her foot as a shoemaker does his stirrup, and after protecting her thumb with a stout leathern stall, took her knife once more in hand and began pulling. The tail end of the skin was turned from her, that she might work against the grain. Now and then some tuft or knot in the wool brought into play the card, a kind of curry-comb. Its back and handle are of wood, and for its teeth it has close rows of pin-wire. At every pull of the knife, out came a bunch of grey hairs, till presently a most beautiful under clothing of delicate wool, darker than the surface hair, was disclosed. The pullings are allowed to fall upon the floor, and at the end of the task carefully gathered up and stored away. They will make stuffing for cheap beds. Cheap lodginghouse-keepers, too, remarked my guide, very often impose a rabbit for a goose-down bed upon their customers. "The price of down just now is bad. Not worth more than threepence per pound. That's because feathers are cheap. Some time back it brought sixpence."

"What becomes of your waste?" I asked.

"Waste, sir! No waste here. All our trimmings and stuff, being of a very heating nature, makes an excellent manure for some things, hops for instance, and finds a ready market. The pullers all work piece work, and if they stick to 'collar' can earn ten or twelve shillings a week, but a great many of them, as I told you just now, will keep Saint Monday, and some do not come to shop before Wednesday. Pretty creatures among them I can tell you. They take their dinner and tea upon the premises, the employer finding firing accommodation. They come at nine in the morning, and quit at eight in the evening. Formerly much of this work was given out, but it is more to the interest of the employer to have everything done upon his own premises."

I was now taken into the machinery department. A shop eighty or ninety feet long and some five-and-twenty wide opened before me. On one side and near the roof ran a shaft and drum, whence leather bands were made to connect themselves with a series of six machines ranged down the middle of the floor. They were not very complex of structure. The drum-band moved a wheel which moved another wheel, which moved a cylinder about a foot and a half long and six inches in diameter. Upon this cylinder were arranged diagonally five knives, which in their revolution came into

the most delicate articulation with a perfectly straight-set bed knife. Two fluted rollers in front were used as a means of feeding the knives. The nose end of a skin was introduced between these rollers. Away it glided, and lo, in a second or two the fleece or lock of wool began to descend into a tin receiver. The skin proper, or *pelt*, fell upon the floor cut up fine as hay. The fleece was now turned over in a sheet of brown paper, and laid upon a kind of counter. Having had certain portions removed by a picker, it passed into the hands of a young woman, called a locker, who sorted out other parts; for be it known a rabbit's, unlike a gentleman's coat, is not expected to be of the same quality all over. The *pate*, *cheek*, and *sides* had been put apart, and the most valuable portion of the lock, the back, remained. This was dexterously made into a flattish kind of ball, and with the grain still unbroken placed carefully into a brown paper bag, ready for sale. While the backs were worth six shillings a pound, the sides were valued by the pound at four shillings, and the pate and cheek at not more than two and sixpence.

I observed that a number of the skins being cut, were of a very deep orange cast, and asked the reason. "After the skins have left the pulling-room," said my informant, "they are taken into a shed, and the wool is damped with a preparation of aquafortis, mercury, and other chemicals. They are then carried into a heated apartment where they dry, and in so doing, turn to the colour you see; that is, they are what we call 'carroted.' We mostly give it them in a milder form, and then they don't change colour."

"And why are they carroted?"

"That is to make the wool easier to work, when in the hands of the hat maker."

Each machine then requires four attendants, a feeder, a picker, a locker, and a clipper. The picker is always a girl of fourteen or fifteen. The other three are young women. The clipper's duty is, with a pair of shears, to snip off the wool from any fragments of skin that cannot be passed through the machine, or that fall off while the skins are being cut. Feeders and lockers alike are paid twelve shillings a week, clippers nine, and pickers six shillings. All employed in this shop were of a superior cast to the pullers, evidently a remove or two above them, and were dressed in neat cotton gowns and coarse linen aprons. There was a man to superintend the whole of the machinery, see to the grinding of the knives, and so forth. Every night the wool cut during the day is carefully weighed and compared with the number of skins given out, and a pretty just estimate formed of the amount of care and honesty exercised in this department. The instrument by which the work is performed is known as the American machine, and was introduced into England about five-and-thirty years ago. Before that, for some fifteen years, the chopping machine was in use. It was a vast improvement upon hand labour, but slow in comparison to the machine which takes its

place. As the name implies, it chopped off the wool, and did not cut the pelt up into shreds, as the American machine does, but left it perfectly whole.

"And what becomes of the pelt?" I asked.

"Principally used for making size," was the reply. Then, with a wicked twinkle of the eye, and in a tone highly confidential, "I have heard that it does also find its way, in various jelly forms, to the tables of the wealthy. And why not, sir? A very clean feeder is the rabbit. Ah! and it does make a good jelly, too, even in its rough state; for in the summer months, when paunch is not always fit to eat, I often boil down a handful of pelt for our yard dog, and he seems to like it, and it never disagrees with him. Why shouldn't they prepare it, and flavour it, and sent it as a delicacy to May Fair?"

Having spent nearly three-quarters of an hour with the pullers and cutters, I found, upon turning to leave, that I had myself a good deal of the rabbit about me. The flue and the dust had given a downy coat to my back, and I looked as if I was already past the first stage of a metamorphosis. However, I could soon be disenchanted with a clothes-brush.

Before the silk hat came in, an event celebrated by the "Free and Easy" Lyrist of the day, who recommended all young men who wished

To cut a shine

To take his advice at once, and buy a four and nine, rabbit wool was in as great demand as now, being used with lambs' wool for the bodies of the beaver hats. Hare skins in those days were twice as valuable as they now are. The wool was used to assist in napping. The long, coarse, red hair was not pulled out, as in the case of the rabbit, but was shorn down to the under wool, which has a glossy black surface, beneath which, again, all is most delicately silky and white.

A beaver hat in the good old times cost twenty-seven and sixpence, or a guinea and a half. But though men paid for hats napped with beaver wool, they very often got only an imitation article. The best substitute was furnished by an animal known in the fur trade as the neutre. This creature is about the size of a moderately small dog; perhaps a very big cat would be nearer the mark. Of an amphibious turn, the neutre inhabits the banks of South American rivers, and can swim and dive with any water rat.

"There is nothing more to be learned on these premises," remarked my guide, as we again descended, "but if you would like to see how the dressing of rabbit skins is managed I shall be glad to show you." I bowed my thanks. "Formerly fur cutting and fur dressing were one business; now they are kept quite separate. About five minutes' walk from here is a dresser's, not a large business, but there you can see just as much as you would at the biggest place in London."

After a walk of a quarter of mile or thereabouts,

through back streets and grimy passages, we paused in front of an old-fashioned house with a flight of three stone steps, and a cellar gaping with open mouth beneath what had once been the front-parlour window. A little wicket gate with a spring lock yielded to the touch of my guide, and we were in the shop. Small bundles of dressed rabbit skins were tumbled confusedly together behind the counter, and another batch stood piled more regularly against the wall. A man who looked as though he had just been delivering a load of bricks made his appearance. He was covered with a fine red dust, and spoke with a strong Celtic accent. He informed us that the "maisther" was not in, but was "expected" every minute, whereupon my guide said we were going below, and that if the governor came in he was to be told where he might find us. Stepping carefully down a dark winding stair I quickly reached the lower regions. The light that entered from the cellar-flap was dim. For all that, I could see that the flooring was of earth and the ceiling of rough planks and joists. The odour was that of a hot menagerie. I must confess, too, that I was startled, when on turning a corner, I suddenly came upon five savage-looking creatures perfectly naked, with eyes that rolled wildly in the uncertain light, and whose features were disfigured with red stains. They swayed their bodies from side to side as in some mystic dance, muttering meanwhile in a language quite unknown to me, what seemed to be an incantation. I fell back, but my conductor reminded me of his presence by whispering in my ear, "Tubbers, sir!" Reassured I took a second glance, and true enough each man was dancing up to his middle in a tub. A piece of canvas nailed to the staves was secured by a string to the performer's waist. This to prevent the escape of his steam.

"Gave you a start, didn't it?"

"It did, indeed."

"Irishmen to a man," he continued; "and precious hard-working fellows they are. They begin that fun at eight o'clock in the morning, and very often are not out of their tubs again except for meals till eight at night. Frequently they take their tea in the tub rather than put themselves to the trouble of dressing."

"Warm work, seemingly," I remarked.

My eyes having adapted themselves to the light, I could see the perspiration coursing down the skin of the man nearest me, fretting little channels through the colouring matter with which he was coated.

"Whatever are they about?"

"Tubbing rabbit skins, making the pelt into leather."

"They look like painted savages."

"Yes, that's the mahogany dust. The skins are taken in their raw state, as you saw the pullers get them. The feet are cut off. To make them a bit soft, they are rubbed through the piece of rope nailed in a loop against yonder beam. After that they are well buttered, not with Dorset at eighteenpence a pound, the commonest tub scrapings will do as well. They

are then handed over to one of these gentlemen, who begins dancing, and his perspiration mingling with the butter, gradually converts the pelt into leather. Mahogany dust is now introduced, which completely clears away any superfluous grease. This done the skins are taken out, opened, and handed over to the flesher. Here he is." The person alluded to had just come tumbling in the most professional manner down the open throat of the cellar, to avoid the trouble of the staircase. He said, "Good morning," and at once took a seat where he got full benefit of the daylight. An upright post stood before him, into which was fixed perpendicularly a knife about a foot and a half long. The edge was turned from him. He took up a skin perfectly flat and soft, but which looked far too wide to have belonged to a coney. Having further stretched it by giving a sideway tug or two, he brought its pelt against the blade, and in a few minutes had pared off the whole of the outward integument, thus exposing a most delicate leather, equal to any dress kid. The skin was now ready for dyeing; a process usually managed off the premises. The dyer generally is some German living in the neighbourhood of Whitechapel or Bethnal Green. In a few days it finds its way back to the dresser so completely changed that not even a rabbit—much less any lady—would understand it to be a rabbit skin. Now it passes into the hands of the manufacturer of collars, cuffs, tippets, muffs, &c., and very soon appears behind a sheet of plate glass, ticketed "Mock Sable," "Mock Neutre," &c., or without the prefix "mock." People who fancy that they know the real article when they see it, might be taken in by a mock sable, no one could possibly be deceived by mock ermine. That is a complete mockery. It is attempting too much. It is like trying to palm copper off for gold. A child might see that mock ermine is only white rabbit skin, though everybody may not know that the little black tails which ornament its surface are not tails at all, but made of stripings from the legs of black rabbits.

THE ECLIPSE SEEN IN INDIA.

In number four hundred and eighty-four of our last volume, we gave some account of what might be expected from the then coming eclipse, looking at it from the French scientific point of view. As the event was followed by two very remarkable circumstances, we now relate briefly what occurred according to the same authorities, and notably that of M. Henri de Parville. There is no need to remind the reader of our neighbours' natural and honourable jealousy as to their priority in any discovery.

When the mission charged by the Minister of Public Instruction with observing the eclipse of the 18th August last, embarked at Marseilles, M. de Parville wrote: "Most of the European governments are sending missions to Hindostan and the coast of Siam. It is fortunate that French astronomy will be represented at this

sort of competitive meeting to be held at the extremity of Asia, and of which the eclipse will be the principal object. It affords an excellent opportunity of proving that our astronomy has been calumniated, and that it is capable of occupying, now as formerly, the foremost rank in the world. Our anticipation has been fulfilled. France has brilliantly confirmed her preponderance. Henceforward, there is connected with the French mission to India an ineffaceable souvenir, a striking discovery, which will mark an epoch in our astronomical annals. The learned world owes it entirely to M. Janssen, the envoy of the Minister and the Académie des Sciences."

Let us now state what this discovery is. Until very lately, it cannot be denied, we had very incomplete notions respecting the physical constitution of the sun. Strange enough, from a distance of ninety millions of miles, more or less, we weighed it, calculated its superficial area, determined its enormous volume, fixed the time of its rotation on its axis, but *what* this dazzling sphere was, no man could tell—whether a solid or liquid globe, or merely a balloon of white-hot vapours. To increase our perplexity, on its brilliant disc towards the centre black spots were noticed here and there, whose configuration changed ceaselessly. They revolved with the sun, and sometimes appeared in considerable numbers. It was calculated that some of them occupied a space four times the total surface of the earth. Their diameter sometimes exceeded thirty thousand miles, that of the earth being eight thousand only. Consequently they presented abysses in which the earth itself would make about the same figure as a big stone thrown into a well.

It can hardly be wondered that the spots on the sun set astronomers' imaginations to work. Fontenelle's ideas respecting the plurality of worlds still retained their hold on many minds. Every star and planet must be habitable. The sun was peopled with inhabitants. It has already been told how the sun was enveloped with atmosphere over atmosphere, one screening its surface from insupportable glare, another radiating light and heat to the outer universe. The sun's spots were rents through these overlying atmospheres, allowing us a peep at the solid and shaded solar surface beneath. Great men, like Herschell and Arago, believed in or accepted this hypothesis, which we now feel too complex and ingenious to be true.

It has also been told how Bunsen and others, by spectral analysis, i.e. by examining the spectrum cast by a prism, enabled us to glance into infinite space and scrutinise the materials of which the stars are made. There does not, in fact, exist a substance which, when burning, does not send us its own distinct luminous note. Our eye, unfortunately, is unable to appreciate their differences. That organ, inferior to our ear, fails to catch the shades of this glittering music; there are chromatic scales which it cannot seize. Nevertheless, by a clever artifice, the difficulty is got over to some extent. The eye is enabled to

appreciate the peculiar characteristics of each individual light, from whatever radiant source it reaches us.

If we put a glass prism in the course of a ray of light, that light, by traversing the prism, is decomposed into its primitive elements. It is an experiment which may be tried any sunshiny day; and sometimes an icicle, drawing-room ornament, or a gem, will try it for us. At first sight, the eye perceives a series of lovely hues ranged one above the other, calling to mind the colours of the rainbow, with which, in fact, they are identical. On inspecting the party-coloured ribbon so obtained more closely, we discover, when the light comes from the sun, hundreds of black stripes of extremest fineness. When the light proceeds from an incandescent solid or liquid body, the stripes disappear, and the coloured ribbon or spectrum, is continuous. If, on the contrary, the light is given out by burning gas, bright and brilliant stripes appear in the spectrum. If, lastly, the source of light is an incandescent nucleus enclosed in a gaseous envelope, the image, as is the case with the sun, is traversed by a series of black lines.

Both the black and the brilliant lines were long a puzzle to natural philosophers. In 1822 Herschell remarked that when salts of lime, copper, and strontian were introduced into a flame, luminous lines were produced in the spectrum of that flame. Not long afterwards, Brewster and Talbot ascertained that the brilliant stripes varied with the nature of the body put into the flame. Common salt, for instance, gives a bright yellow stripe. Potash causes the simultaneous appearance of a red stripe and a violet stripe. It was clear, therefore, that the *bright* lines of the spectrum resulted from the presence of determinate compounds in the flame. But what of the *black* stripes?

The labours of several other philosophers helped Messieurs Kirchhoff and Bunsen to demonstrate undeniably, in 1860, that every bright light in the spectrum is transformed into a dark one, *when a source of intense light exists behind the flame*. Example: soda gives a bright yellow stripe. Put an electric light behind the flame producing the spectrum, and instantly the bright stripe disappears, to give place to a corresponding black one. The fact is easily accounted for, when we remember that the property of emitting light, like that of radiating heat, is combined with the property of absorbing it in inverse proportion. The more light a luminous object gives out, the less it will take in. The more capable a flame is of emitting light, the more does it, from that very circumstance, extinguish a light placed behind it. It is therefore clear that every line which is more luminous than the neighbouring portions of the spectrum of a flame, will necessarily become darker as soon as a source of light is placed behind it. Such is the answer to the black line enigma.

But the spectrum of the solar light is cut up and riddled with black lines through and through. The conclusion is that incandescent flames or vapours, containing a great number of

volatilised substances, surround the sun, and that behind those flames there exists a source of light still more powerful and intense than they are. MM. Kirchhoff and Bunsen carefully examined the *position* of the lines produced in the solar spectrum by the principal substances found on the earth, and they then turned them black by the application of a more intense source of light. Now, they found that there was an absolute identity in the situation and distance of the black stripes in the solar spectrum, and of the stripes thus artificially produced. This precise coincidence allows us to conclude the existence, both in the sun and the earth, of certain constituent elements. The light emitted by the sun indicates the presence in it of iron, magnesium, sodium, potassium, barium, copper, manganese, zinc, &c. Hitherto they have been unable to ascertain the existence of gold, silver, lead, tin, antimony, cadmium, arsenic, mercury, &c.

We have thus a telegraph established between the stars and ourselves. The telegrams reach us in letters of fire. The lines of the spectrum replace the letters of the alphabet. Every element has its characteristic signs; but the reading of this alphabet is very complicated, and we have scarcely as yet begun to spell it. Evidently discoveries will be greatly multiplied when we have learnt to read it fluently. Nevertheless the principal stars, comets (one of which has been found to contain carbon), and nebulae have already been explored with considerable success.

It was an inevitable consequence of the preceding facts that the habitable condition of the sun is a fallacy, and that we do *not* see the sun's soil at the bottom of his spots. Our central life-giving luminary must consist of a gaseous incandescent atmosphere containing metallic vapours, inclosing a solid or liquid burning nucleus. The spots in this case would be veritable clouds, produced by the partial and local condensation of solar vapours. There is a discrepancy between Kirchhoff's observations and Arago's experiments on polarised light; but the apparent contradiction has been reconciled by an able French astronomer, M. Faye. Kirchhoff's spectral observations are quite consistent with those afforded by a perfectly gaseous sphere holding solid particles in suspension.

The sun, therefore, must be set down as neither solid nor liquid, but gaseous, as might be inferred from its slight mean density. This theory has the further philosophical advantage of being applicable to the other heavenly bodies, each one of which would pass through successive phases corresponding to the divers epochs of their evolution and progress. Each heavenly body must successively experience the gaseous, liquid, and solid states. The sun, the earth, and the moon, for instance, offer us the three distinct ages in the life of worlds. The earth once must have been for the moon what the sun is now for us. The moon's smaller mass would sooner grow cold. Then the earth, after having been what the sun is,

would become encrusted with a solid shell whose *Ætnas* and *Vesuviuses*, whose German and Pyrenean thermal waters betray the fires still smouldering within. We are, fortunately for us, behindhand with regard to the moon, but considerably in advance of the sun. Every heavenly body must undergo the same successive transformations in the eternal harmony of the universe.

Another mode of investigating the sun's constitution is the observation of total eclipses. At such times, the moon, by screening almost the whole of the solar disc, prevents the observer from being blinded by excess of light. The outline and profile of the sun, which could not be examined under ordinary circumstances, are then distinguished with perfect clearness. During the eclipse of 1860 the French astronomers who went to Spain distinctly saw the different peculiarities presented by the brilliant crown which surrounds the moon's black disc. In the middle of the luminous ring they perceived what looked like pink or red clouds.

These "protuberances," to retain the name first given to them, appeared under very varied guise. Before the eclipse of 1860, some observers were inclined to take them for the summits of exceedingly lofty mountains rising above the solar atmosphere. But after it, doubt was no longer possible. The semblances of mountain peaks, it is true, were seen; but pointed were less frequent than rounded and lengthy forms. Many protuberances, moreover, were absolutely detached from the sun, like the cumulus clouds which float in our atmosphere. Others were bent in a sidewise direction, recalling flames under the influence of a current of air. A few French savans considered the protuberances as optical illusions produced by the moon's interposition; but the majority regarded them as appendages composed of fiery vapours streaming into the upper regions of the solar atmosphere. Spectral analysis, still in its infancy, had not yet said its say.

The eclipse of 1868 was therefore impatiently awaited. M. Janssen, well known by his spectroscopic researches, directed his course to Masulipatam. Afterwards, advised by persons who knew the country, he determined to proceed to Guntoor. Scarcely a week after the event, he sent by telegraph the agreeable news, "Eclipse well observed; protuberances gaseous." M. Stéphan, who directed the Malacca expedition, announced, a month afterwards, that four protuberances had been seen on the corona, and their gaseous nature determined by their spectrum. Moreover, from the undue prolongation of brilliant lines in the spectrum, M. Rayet deduced the conclusion that a certain portion of the incandescent gaseous matter of which the protuberances consist, extends to a height in the solar atmosphere beyond the limits assigned to it by human eyes.

In a letter to the Minister of Public Instruction, dated 19th September, M. Janssen wrote: "Not having the time to send a detailed account to-day, I will have the honour of doing so by next post. Guntoor has doubtless been the most favoured station.

The sky was clear, especially during the totality, and my powerful nine-feet-focus telescopes allowed me to pursue the analytical study of all the phenomena of the eclipse. Immediately after the totality, two magnificent protuberances appeared: one of them, more than three minutes in height, shone with a splendour difficult to conceive. The analysis of its light immediately informed me that it consisted of an immense incandescent gaseous column, principally composed of hydrogen.

"But the most important result of these observations is the discovery of a method which suggested itself during the actual occurrence of the eclipse, and which permits the study of the protuberances and the circumsolar regions *at all times*, without having to wait for the passage of an opaque body in front of the sun's disc.

"The very day after the eclipse, the new method was successfully put in practice, and I was able to witness the phenomena presented by a fresh eclipse, which lasted the whole day long. Yesterday's protuberances were profoundly modified. Of the grand protuberance there scarcely remained a trace, and the distribution of the gaseous matter was quite different to what it had been. From that day up to the 4th of September I have constantly studied the sun with this object in view. I have drawn up maps of the protuberances, which show with what rapidity (often in a few minutes) these immense masses of gas change their form and place. Lastly, during this period, which has been, as it were, an eclipse lasting seventeen days, I have collected a great number of facts, which presented themselves spontaneously, respecting the physical constitution of the sun."

M. Janssen's method, like Columbus's finding America, will appear very simple now it is known. On looking at the sun near its outer edge, but a little outside it, where the protuberances show themselves, it is clear that not only the radiations from the great luminary itself will meet the eye, but also, mingled with them, the light of the protuberances. Consequently, the spectrum of the mixed radiations ought to contain both the black stripes of the solar rays and the bright stripes of the protuberances. And, in fact, when M. Janssen had recognised the bright lines of the protuberances, he found them again below the black lines of the solar spectrum and in their prolongations. Consequently, there are two systems of lines: one lying above the other. By reading the lower scale, you have before you the characteristic features of the protuberances. But we do not yet know our spectral alphabet; we are only beginning to learn to read.

M. Janssen expresses his high appreciation of the reception given him by the English authorities in India. A steamer was placed at his disposal to take him from Madras to Masulipatam; another for the Godavery; and a young sub-collector was attached to his mission, to smooth any difficulties that might arise. He ought now to have reached Calcutta, and proposes to carry out in the Himalayas certain

physico-terrestrial researches recommended by the Académie.

A curious incident, not without precedent, has occurred with relation to the new discovery. It will be remembered that when M. Le Verrier, by mathematical calculation, indicated the place of the still unseen planet Neptune, Mr. Adams, almost simultaneously, by the same means arrived at the same result. In the present case, at the very time when M. Janssen's letter reached France, Mr. Norman Lockyer, while exploring the outskirts of the sun, observed the bright lines which betray a protuberance, and which he found upon the black lines of the ordinary spectrum. Mr. Lockyer was acquainted with the position of the lines of the protuberances indicated by MM. Rayet, Tennant, and Herschell; and he was able, by comparison, to recognise, like M. Janssen, the lines characteristic of the protuberances.

The discovery was made on the 20th of October, communicated to Mr. Balfour Stewart on the 21st, and transmitted on the 23rd to Mr. Warren De la Rue, then in Paris. On the 25th, the *Moniteur* published M. Janssen's letter. On the 26th, that letter, and also the English letter to Mr. Warren De la Rue, were simultaneously communicated to the Académie des Sciences. The coincidence is singular. The French astronomer, however, while fully admitting the independence of his rival's proceeding, claims, nevertheless, a month's priority in the discovery.

Be it so. Two philosophers working separately, have supplied us with the means of sounding space. We are enabled by the spectroscope to test the nature of objects not only at prodigious distances, but in regions which are absolutely invisible and impenetrable by human eye. And to connect all this with what exists at home, the magic tell-tale has whispered to us that a comet which flitted past us in June, although at an enormous distance, carried about with it volatilised, in its eccentric wanderings through the heavens, the same elements which here lie entombed and imprisoned, though not for ever, in the shape of coal. If it would only crystallise properly and come back to us, it would be the finest diamond that ever was seen. Fancy the discovery of such an islet fallen into the sea, even if not bigger nor taller than the Calf of Man!

A SLIGHT QUESTION OF FACT.

It is never well for the public interest that the originator of any social reform should be soon forgotten. Further, it is neither wholesome nor right (being neither generous nor just) that the merit of his work should be gradually transferred elsewhere.

Some few weeks ago, our contemporary, *THE PALL MALL GAZETTE*, in certain strictures on our Theatres which we are

very far indeed from challenging, remarked on the first effectual discouragement of an outrage upon decency which the lobbies and upper-boxes of even our best Theatres habitually paraded within the last twenty or thirty years. From those remarks it might appear as though no such Manager of Covent Garden or Drury Lane as Mr. MACREADY had ever existed.

It is a fact beyond all possibility of question, that Mr. MACREADY, on assuming the management of Covent Garden Theatre in 1837, did instantly set himself, regardless of precedent and custom down to that hour obtaining, rigidly to suppress this shameful thing, and did rigidly suppress and crush it during his whole management of that theatre, and during his whole subsequent management of Drury Lane. That he did so, as certainly without favour as without fear; that he did so, against his own immediate interests; that he did so, against vexations and oppositions which might have cooled the ardour of a less earnest man, or a less devoted artist; can be better known to no one than the writer of the present words, whose name stands at the head of these pages.

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOATED-SCHLOSS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS. CHAPTER II.

WITH a firmer and more rapid step, Magda recrossed the bridge, and passed under the portcullis once more. She would not return to the parlour. By her desire, Bettine conducted her straight to the tapestried room, which was now flooded with moonlight. She threw the window wide, and then, dismissing Bettine, she knelt down beside the great old-fashioned bed, and prayed—prayed for forgiveness of her many sins, poor little soul!—for courage to meet present trial, whatsoever it might be—for faith that should resist any devil's machination, and strength to overcome temptation. And to this was joined a fervent prayer that "unser Vater" would shield her Albrecht from all evil, and remove that dark and nameless cloud under which he suffered.

She rose and blew out the candles, which flared in the night breeze, and sent flickering shadows upon the tapestry. She did not need them to undress by, for the room was as light as day. She could see the faces of Ahasuerus and Esther in their royal robes on the wall opposite, with the black-bearded Mordecai, and the evil-eyed Haman hanging on the gallows, which last

was a ghastly image enough without the trembling light, by which the corpse appeared to be swaying to and fro.

It was warm; she would leave the window open all night; the moon was friendly; she could hear the wind stirring the topmost boughs of the forest yonder, where Albrecht was; and that was something. She had double-locked the door, and now she slid off the narrow quaint garment wherein she had been attired, and crept into the great black bed, which looked to her so like a grave, with its headstone and its garland in memory of the departed. The clock struck ten, as she lay down, and turned her face towards the window. The moon itself she could not see, though its light streamed in upon the floor; but there were spaces of clear sky, sprinkled with stars, across which the dusky shadow of a bat every now and then flitted. Except the hoarse croaking of the frogs, there was no other sign of life. For a long time she lay awake . . . she heard eleven strike, and then twelve . . . a prey to all manner of fancies. Now she thought that Esther stirred from her place upon the wall, and that she heard the rustle of her royal robes; now it was Ahasuerus who was stepping from his throne, and advancing to meet her; now Haman's dead limbs seemed to become animated, and the miscreant was descending from the gallows. But, one by one, these fancies wore themselves out. The woven figures came not to life; no sound, not even that of a mouse behind the wainscot, broke the perfect stillness of the night. The imagination, without aliment, cannot keep up for ever at high-pressure pitch; and when youth and health are in the other scale, nature will sooner or later have its way, and claim its right of rest. She fell asleep.

How long she remained so, she never knew; but she started from her sleep with the horrible consciousness that something was near her—something between her and the window—something bending over her, with its face close, close to hers. She lay there breathless, motionless. She tried to scream, to spring from the bed; she could not stir a muscle, and *the thing* stood there, immovable, with its glittering eyes looking down into hers. She knew she had been dreaming; she asked herself, in those few doubtful moments, whether this was a continuation of her nightmare? For, paralysed with terror as she was, strange to say, the deadly face of this shadow brought vividly to her mind the picture which had made

so deep an impression on her at Prague. Though this was the face of a shadow, white and hollow, there were the same extraordinary eyes, unlike any Magda had ever seen. The rest was shrouded in black, and the moon from behind touched the edges of one white lock of hair with silver. "Louise!" murmured the shadow; and Magda felt a death-cold hand laid upon hers, outside the coverlet. She trembled so that the very bed shook under her, but she gave no other sign of life.

Lower and lower, closer and closer, bent the shadow. And now, indeed, Magda shut her eyes, and felt that life was ebbing fast from her heart; for the corpse-like face touched hers, and those dead lips rained kisses on her cheek. Then, with a great cry, as though something within her had snapped, Magda felt a sudden momentary power given her to spring from the bed, and ran shrieking towards the window. It was but momentary; there was another shriek, the piercing echo of her own; she was conscious of the spectre's rushing towards her, white hair flowing, wild arms tossed into the sky; and then Magda sank in a swoon upon the floor.

Bettine was bending over her with sal-volatile, when she opened her eyes. Hanne stood by the bed, whereon something black lay stretched.

"Mein Gott! sie ist todt!" were the first words Magda heard. They came from the lips of the grim Hanne. The door opened quickly at the same moment, and Magda found herself in Albrecht's arms.

But the next minute he turned towards the bed. Hanne and he interchanged looks; it was enough; and then, leaving Magda to Bettine's care, he ran towards the bed, and threw himself on his knees beside it. . . . Too late! too late! All his hope, then—his heart's first wish for years past—was now frustrated, at the very moment of fulfilment! He buried his head in the coverlid, and Magda heard a low sob. There was no other sound in the room. Then, after a while, she caught these disjointed sentences, wrung from the agony of the young man's soul:

"Du barmherziger Himmel! . . . Is it all over then? . . . After so many years, so many!—without one kind look—without a word! It is hard. To go thus from me before the cloud was lifted. . . . Ach! mutter—thou knowest now the truth—open thy lips, but once more—only once, to bless me, even me, thy only son, now

that I kiss thy dear hand after so many, many years!" And it was with a tender and sorrowful earnestness that Albrecht performed that simple act of German reverence.

But from the black bed, now more truly like a grave than ever, came no response, no sound, no sign that a living soul lay there; that the ear heard, or the heart felt the passionate adjuration addressed to it.

Magda, as she looked and listened, felt still so utterly bewildered that she could only keep asking herself whether it was not all a dream—whether, in truth, it was her Albrecht whom she saw and heard. Yet, at the window where she lay, the night, with its myriad stars, was gone; the pale opal light of morning was breaking in the east; she could even hear the soft dewy twitter of awakening birds. It was no dream; she could recal it all, the lonely, dreary evening, the terrible night—no, she was not dreaming, and that was her Albrecht, in the flesh, before her. But she felt an aching giddiness in her head; she raised her hand, and withdrew it, covered with blood. In falling she had struck herself, and, concealed by the masses of unrolled hair, the wound had escaped Bettine's attention. The old woman now ran to fetch the necessary means of staunching it, but the loss of blood had been considerable. Magda attempted to raise her head, but the room swam round with her; a film gathered across her eyes, and before Bettine's return, her young mistress had relapsed once more into unconsciousness.

Many hours after, in another and very different room in the schloss, a room surrounded with implements of the chase, the walls bristling with antlers, the polished floor pleasantly islanded with skins of deer and chamois, the young gräfin lay upon the jäger's bed, and her husband sat beside her. He had had her carried there, as being the most cheerful room in the house, and here he had been tending her, and (seeing her weak and excited condition) had enforced absolute silence, after her return to consciousness, and had answered her questions in monosyllables. But now, the day was far spent; the darkness, that season of feverish terror during which she had suffered so acutely twenty-four hours before, was at hand; it was well to tell her all, and to calm her mind by a knowledge of the truth. So there he sat, beside the little bed on which his young wife lay, holding her hand, and with a face on which could be clearly traced the im-

press of a recent and heavy trouble, he told her his story of the past in these words:

"It is all over now, my Magda—the mystery of our moated schloss—the hope and the despair of my life, which I dared not confide to thee; it is all over now. I can tell thee everything. . . . Why did I beseech thee to come here? What end was there to be gained by this? Listen. It is a sad enough story, which has embittered all my life, and the effects of which, in some sort, I shall carry to my grave. . . .

"Thou hast heard of poor Louise? She was my only sister, my senior by five years, and my mother's favourite, who doated on this daughter with an intensity which blinded her to every other object, and made her regard even me—strange as it may seem—in the light of an interloper, whose coming to divide the inheritance with her first-born was an injury and a wrong. My father, on the other hand, was very fond of me; but he died when I was nine; and for many years there was only Louise's sweet nature and her love for me to counteract the coldness and neglect of my poor partial mother. . . . God knows I never resented this. . . . I never ceased to love her; a kind word from her at any time made me as happy as a king. . . . and I know now that even at that time, poor soul, her brain was in a measure diseased, and she was suffering under the chronic monomania which afterwards assumed an acute form.

"My sister occupied the tower where you slept last night; her sitting-room below, her bedroom above. A panel behind the arras, and a winding stair cut in the thickness of the wall, lead from these rooms to those that my mother inhabited. Thus she could visit her favourite child at all hours of the day and night without traversing the long corridor and public stair; and of this privilege she availed herself so constantly that I never knew her come to Louise's room by any other way.

"One evening, when I was about fifteen, I was in this room, plaguing my sister while she was dressing, by performing all manner of gymnastic feats, of which I was very proud, but which only alarmed her. At last, I bethought me of a water-pipe outside the window, which ran into the moat, and down which I thought it would be good sport to slide. Before Louise saw what I was about, I sprang on to the window-sill, and, clinging hold of the mullion with one hand, sought the pipe with the

other, and tried to fasten my feet around it. The operation was not an easy or rapid one, and before it was accomplished Louise, with a shriek of terror, had flown to the window, and was endeavouring to hold me back. But it was in vain her fragile fingers clutched me; I was resolved to succeed in my attempt; and now, indeed, I felt my feet were fastened round the pipe securely. Closer and closer I drew myself towards it, and further from the window, until, at last, I let go the mullion.

"Then it was that my poor sister, in her nervous terror, bent her whole body out of the window, and, stretching forth both hands, she lost her balance, and fell, with one wild scream, headlong into the moat below!

"Never, if I were to live a thousand years, can I forget that moment! How it was I managed to slide down the pipe, I scarcely know, now. I can just remember catching sight of my mother's awful face, and hearing her shrieks at the window; the next minute I was in the water, and striking out in the direction of something that floated near me.

"Half a dozen men were in the moat as soon as I was, and between them she was quickly brought to shore, and laid upon the bank; but, alas! the truth was evident at a glance; there could not be a doubt about it; she was dead. She had struck her head in falling, and death had mercifully been instantaneous. Would to God it had come to my poor, afflicted mother! . . . She had entered that room by the panelled door, at the very moment that Louise lost her balance and fell; and she lost her reason from that hour. It was Hanne who held her back when she would have thrown herself out after her idolised child. It was Hanne who again held her back when she rushed at me with an open knife. The dislike in which she had always held me was now fomented to positive hatred. She regarded me as the wilful murderer of Louise, and the mere mention of my name was enough to bring on a paroxysm of mania. The doctor decided at once that she must never be permitted to see me. I was sent away to college, and when, at rare intervals, I returned here, my presence never failed to rouse her out of her habitual condition of quiet harmless melancholy into one of ungovernable fury. Thus, for years past I have never been able to set my foot within these walls. The world has long believed my mother to be dead; the poor faithful servants here

alone have tended and guarded their old mistress, seeing that she came to no harm, and keeping me regularly informed of the state of her health. She never left the schloss, but wandered to and from Louise's room, by day and night, folding and unfolding her child's clothes, looking at her books in a vacant way, and careful that every little article that had belonged to her should be kept in the very place where Louise left it. The servants told me that she never spoke of Louise as dead; she was always looking for her return. . .

"When I came to man's estate, my first object was to consult, either personally or by letter, all the most eminent surgeons in Europe who have devoted themselves to the study of insanity, as to my hapless mother's condition. There were several consultations, but little comfort came of them. All agreed, indeed, that such a condition was not absolutely hopeless. Cases had been known when, by powerfully affecting the heart upon the one subject which had caused madness, the brain had regained its equilibrium. But such cases were rare, and how, in my mother's case, was this end to be compassed? At last, Dr. — , a man full of original expedients, said to me: 'Find, if you can, some girl who closely resembles what your sister was. . . . Introduce her into the schloss, as nearly as possible under the same circumstances as your sister . . . see what that will do. . . . It may open the sluices of all the poor lady's tender maternal feelings, and thus work a cure. Any way, it can do no harm. I will answer for it, she will not dislike, or try to harm the girl.' . . .

"To comprehend my intense anxiety on this subject, Magda, and the earnest longing wherewith I set about my search, thou must try and enter into my feelings during all these years. Not alone had I been the cause of my poor Louise's death, but also of this enduring and yet more frightful calamity, whereby my mother and I were living on in the world as strangers to each other. . . . It is hardly too much to say that my whole life was embittered by remorse . . . To feel her hand laid upon my head, to hear her say that she forgave me—this was the dearest hope I then had. . . .

"For many years my search was fruitless. I found fair-haired and gentle girls in abundance, but whenever I tried to trace the desired resemblance, it failed; either voice, or face, or manner, or the soul within, was utterly unlike Louise's. It is

rare, after all, to find any two human beings cast in moulds that are at all similar. . . . But, at length, my Magda, I found thee; and in thee, to my great joy, a living image of our lost Louise. . . . Shall I tell thee the truth? I had little thought of love or marriage, at first. Thy father was poor; I was willing to sacrifice two-thirds of my fortune to the accomplishment of my scheme; with that intention I sought thee. . . . But when I came to know thee, my treasure—ah! then it was different. When I came to see thee in thy quiet home, to note thy tender modest graces, Love found me out and conquered me. I thought, if thou wouldst consent to be my wife, here was the true solution of the difficulty. . . . and whether that scheme succeeded or failed, in thee I should, at all events, find a joy and peace that had long been absent from my soul. It has been so—it is so, my darling! The good God has seen fit to take my mother—has not seen fit to bless my original scheme. But he will bless what has grown out of it, that I know.

"I thought it best to conceal the truth from thee. When I brought thee and left thee here alone, it could but have added to thy alarms at first to know of an insane woman's presence in this dreary place, and of the part thou wert called upon to play. Thou wouldst learn it all, naturally, in the course of a day or two; but by that time some change might have been wrought in her condition. Of course I felt dreadfully anxious, yet I knew there was no danger to be apprehended. . . . Hanne has told me everything. From her window, my poor mother saw thee alight, and her eye kindled as she watched thee. All the evening she was strangely agitated, as they had not known her to be for years. By-and-by, on the bridge, she again watched thee stealthily; but could not repress a scream when the mantle fell over the parapet—it looked (Hanne says) from the window like a body falling into the water! Her excitement increased as night advanced; yet it seemed as though she doubted, and would test thy identity before approaching thee openly. Instead of going to Louise's room, as usual, every evening, she waited till night was fully come, when she stole up (followed by Hanne), and stood behind the arras, watching thee until thou wert asleep. Then she came forth, and touched thy clothes—the clothes that had been Louise's—and approached the bed softly, and stood looking

tenderly upon thee. It was strange, Hanne says, to see the working of her face, and hear her muttered words, until, bending lower and lower, she touched thee with her lips, and whispered 'Louise!'

"This was the crisis. . . . How it might have ended, God knows! but for thy natural terror, my poor child, which made thee spring from the bed and rush screaming towards the window.

"No doubt, in the horror of the moment, it seemed to her, poor soul! that the old tragedy was being re-enacted—the scene whereon her mind had dwelt for twenty years rose up before her, and the main-spring of life, long worn, suddenly snapped. With a great cry, she fell back upon the bed, and died, almost instantaneously, I believe. . . .

"Peace be with her! God's decrees are wise, and in denying our prayers, He sometimes grants to us a yet better thing for our consolation," said the young graf in conclusion, as he pressed his wife to his heart.

AS THE CROW FLIES.

DUE WEST. TAUNTON TO EXETER.

THE crow looking towards Exeter, turns a quick eye for a moment ere he rises from his last perch on St. Mary's tower, towards Norton Fitz-Warren on the Wolverton-road. On the hill side above the church there is an old earth-work with a ditch and two ramparts enclosing an area of thirteen acres. The local legend is that an enormous serpent, "the loathly worm" of the old ballads, once dwelt here and devastated the surrounding country. Its ravages are supposed to be portrayed in the carving of the wood screen in the adjoining church. Some say this place was once an old British town; there is a local distich:

When Taunton was a furzy down,
Norton was a market town.

It is in fact to Taunton what Old Sarum is to Salisbury—that is, grandfather. Perhaps some outlawed British chieftain of early days fortified himself here, and tormented the neighbourhood by taking, unasked for, tithe and toll.

The crow glances also at North Curry, not far off, because North Curry is remarkable for being the only place that venerates the memory of that bad son, and infamous monarch, King John. Yet so strong is custom, and so indelible is the respect for the usurper at North Curry, that every Christmas John's "immortal memory" is drunk with all the honours. Let us hope that it was originally Saint John they toasted, and that the dinner only originated in a "church ale." The feast takes place at the Reeve's house, and the chief dish among the pastry is a huge mince pie, orna-

mented with a rude effigy of the ruthless murderer of Prince Arthur. Two candles weighing a pound each are lit, and until they are burnt out the visitors at this festive Dutch auction have a right to sit bemusing themselves with "jolly good ale and old." A marble tablet in the vestry room records the sacred customs to be observed on this occasion, but does not insist on inebriety.

A flight further westward and the crow feels the fresh wind from the Blackdown Hills ruffle the fan feathers of his strong wings. He rests at Wellington on a pleasant red roof and looks up at the Wellington monument. After Talavera, where Arthur Wellesley won his peerage, he chose the name of this town for his title, because his family is supposed to derive its name from Wellesleigh, a place near Wells, and this town is near Wensley, which sounds like Wesley, the name afterwards altered to Wellesley. On being made viscount the duke tried to purchase an estate here, but failed. In the civil wars the Wellington people were notorious Roundheads.

The crow has passed the frontier, and spreads his wings in sunny Devonshire air. Red Devons feed below him in the green meadows. Mossy apple boughs of countless orchards spread beneath him; homely cob walls square out the pastures; thatched cottages cheerily greet the eye.

On the honeycombed battlement of St. Peter's, the central church of the old clothing town of Tiverton, the crow first descends, lightly. This is one of those Devonshire towns that has suffered so much from fire, in consequence of the use of thatched roofs. In June, 1731, when the thatch had dried almost to tinder, a fire broke out in Tiverton, and destroyed at one fell swoop two hundred and ninety-eight of those picturesque, but dangerous, old thatched timber houses. Tiverton has produced at least one celebrated person, for Hannah Cowley, the authoress of the *Belle's Stratagem*, a lively and clever play that long held the Georgian stage, was born here in 1743. She was the daughter of Philip Parkhouse, a bookseller in the town, and she married an officer in the service of the Company.

The crow having rested on theatre roofs before now, has pleasure in the old clothing town between the Exe and Loman, in recalling snatches of the pleasant play by the bookseller's daughter, for was not Elliston the incomparable lover, the Doricourt at Drury Lane in 1815, Lewis the Doricourt at Covent Garden in 1780; Wrench, Flutter; and Mrs. Orger, the Lady Frances Touchwood; and is there not a stage tradition that Miss Younge, as Letitia, always burst into real tears when she took off the mask, in the last scene, and discovered herself to Doricourt? The feigned madness of Doricourt, and the feigned rusticity of Letitia, seem stale enough now, but they delighted audiences once, and Tiverton was proud of the play the royal family had commanded once a season for many years. In 1780 what could have brought the gallery down sooner than such expressive patriotic sentiments as

those of Doricourt: "True. There I plead guilty; but I have never yet found any man whom I could cordially take to my heart and call friend, who was not born beneath a British sky, and whose heart and manners were not truly English?" Or, again: "Cursed be the hour—should it ever arrive—in which British ladies shall sacrifice to foreign graces the grace of modesty?"

That old church on which the crow rests, has a chapel and south porch carved all over with coats of arms, and ships, and woolpacks, and staple marks, by John Greenway, a cloth merchant in 1517, and has seen a good deal of fighting in its time. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, the Devonshire priests roused the commonalty in Devonshire, when Wiltshire and other counties began to rise. Ten thousand of them met under Humphrey Arundel, the Governor of St. Michael's Mount, armed themselves with bows, halberds, hackbuts, and spears, and despising Lord Russell's small force, moved on towards Exeter, carrying before them crosses, banners, holy water, candlesticks, the host covered with a canopy, and all the pomp of Catholic ritualism. Exeter shut her gates against them, they failed in all their attacks, and Lord Russell, reinforced by Sir William Herbert and Lord Gray, bore down at last on the fanatical peasantry with some rough German horse and prompt Italian arquebusiers. The battle was fought at Cranmore, near Collipriest. Tiverton saw that day the insurgents fly before the whirling two-handed swords of the fierce German mercenaries, and the Protector had soon good tidings from Devonshire.

In the civil wars Tiverton streets grew red again with blood freely spilt, for in 1643 the Parliament troops were chased out of it by Cavalier swords; in 1644 it was occupied in force by the king, first, and then by the Earl of Essex; and in 1645 Massey and Fairfax took it by storm. Fairfax, in his stolid way, soon dismantled the castle of the Earls of Devon, built by Richard de Redvers in 1100, and left only those ivied towers which the Carews and the crows now jointly possess; the great fourteenth century gateway still remains.

It was during the storm that Fairfax battered the church so much, the cavaliers having fortified themselves in it, dragged their guns on to the roof, and thrust their muskets out of every loop and window. It was then that the fine carved tombs of the Courtenays were trodden and struck to pieces. There was a monument to Catherine, the daughter of Edward the Fourth, and widow of an Earl of Devonshire, and another to the admiral, the third earl, generally called "the blind and good earl." His epitaph was one of those in which the corpse itself is supposed to talk to you:

Hoe, hoe! who lies here?
I, the good Earl of Devonshire,
With Maud, my wife, to me full dera,
We lyved together fifty-fyve yere.
What wee gave, wee have;
What wee spent wee had;
What wee left wee loste.

The old almshouses, for five poor men in Gold-street, were built by the same John Greenway who did so much for the church, and they are enriched in the same elaborate and quaint manner. They are quiet harbours for the last moorings of five old men, apart from the noise and conflict of the world. On the wall of the chapel are the lines:

Have grace, ye men, and ever pray
For the souls of John and Joan Greenway.

The eagle on a bundle of sticks (a nest), Greenway's device, is still to be seen here.

Tiverton is famous for its factory and its fifteen hundred lace makers. Devonshire was always famous for this human spider work, so graceful and so fragile. The famous Honiton pillow lace has been now superseded by cheap machine-made bobbin net; but machinery does not think as the hand does, and the result is far less refined and intellectual. Devonshire lace making was first introduced by fugitive Flemish protestants in the reign of Elizabeth.

A short flight lands the crow on to the Grecian portico of Silvertown Park, not so much because the great Greek building belongs to the Egremont family, as because it enshrines that portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds, which the worthy Devonshire man painted in his honest pride and delight at being elected mayor of his native town—"an honour which he used to say had given him more pleasure than any other he had received during his life." His father had been master of the great school of Plympton. The corporation disgracefully sold this palladium of theirs to the fifth earl of Egremont for one hundred and fifty pounds.

A skim over the Egremont shrubberies brings the crow to Bickleigh Court, once a seat of the Carews; now only a farm house. The place recalls a thousand legends, dear to schoolboy days, and not without some charm now, of that ingenious and half-crazed vagabond, Bamfylde Moore Carew, "the king of the beggars." Carew, the son of the rector of Bickleigh, was born seven years before the accession of Queen Anne. Bamfylde's scrapes began at Tiverton, where he led the stag hounds over some corn fields, and then ran away from school to avoid punishment. He joined some gipsies, and soon became conspicuous among them by his skill in disguise and begging, and his fondness for the wild, free, yet dissolute and lawless life.

Soon after being chosen king of the beggars, Carew was arrested at Barnstaple, sent to Exeter, and there, without trial, sentenced to transportation to Maryland for five years. At this time transported men were sold to the planters. Carew soon escaped from his master, and, flying to the woods, got among the Indians, and was helped by them on towards Pennsylvania. On returning to England, Carew, occasionally visiting his family in disguise, continued his career of beggar and small swindler, passing off as a shipwrecked sailor, broken-down farmer, or old rag woman; occasionally owning himself to friends of his

family, and rejoicing quite as much in his own ingenuity and the success of his disguises as in the money he obtained. He is said, in old chap books, to have made money by successes in the lottery, and to have eventually returned to Bickleigh, and died there in 1758.

It seems remarkable how such a book as the *Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew* could ever have remained a popular chap book for a whole century; for, except his adventures among the Indians, and the narrative of his two transportations, the biography is little but a series of tricks to extort money. One day he was an old beggar woman laden with children, in her arms and on her back; the next day a burnt-out blacksmith, the day after a rheumatic miser. A mad Tom, a shipwrecked sailor, or a rat-catcher, Carew could assume any disguise at a moment's notice, always to the confusion of justices of the peace and the bleeding of the benevolent. The editor of one edition of the *Life of Bamfylde Moore Carew* thinks it necessary to defend his hero. "The morality of our hero," he says, apologetically, "is obvious in the various reflections he makes as he finds himself in different situations. His lessons are from the vast volume of nature; and though he passed but for a beggar, yet he often appears to have possessed every charm of the mind, and what is more worthy of praise—those better qualities of the heart, without which the others are but frivolous." Modern readers find in the rogue's adventures no trace of anything but promptitude and ingenuity.

A mile or two from Bickleigh the crow flits down to Cadbury Castle, on its isolated hill, where Romans once encamped, and which in 1645 Fairfax's army occupied. It looks across the Exe to another height called Dolberry, in Killerton Park. There is an old distich about these two hills:

If Cadbury Castle and Dolberry Hill delven were
All England might plough with a golden share.

The country people declare that a flying dragon, snorting and breathing fire, has been seen at night flying towards these two hills, guarding the great treasure hid in them by kings and warriors long dead. It is singular that there is another Dolberry on the Mendips, and that a rhyme almost similar gives hope of treasure there also. The time has no doubt come when a systematic investigation of all such localities as Dolberry should be made. The result would be in many cases as profitable as it would be interesting. From Cadbury many camps can be seen. They lie thick around Woodbury, Sidbury, Henbury, Dumptdon, Membury, and Castle Neroche, in Dorsetshire—all these the warriors of Cadbury may have wished to watch and supervise. The enclosure, with a circumference of about five hundred yards, has two fosses. In the first one there is a pit six feet deep, probably intended to collect rain water. It was excavated in 1848, and a curious finger ring, some gold bracelets, and styles for writing of late Roman character were found in it. They had been there for centuries within

reach of any spade; so treasures often lie unnoticed under our very feet.

Swift ply the black wings through the ebb and flow of the blue air, over the fine tower of Stockleigh Pomeroy, and the grand umbrageous trees of Shobbrook Park, and the crow alights softly on the central tower of Crediton Church. "Kirton," says the local proverb, "was a town when Exeter was a mere range of furze and thorns," but ages ago ancient Britons, looking from Down Head, Posbury Hill, or Blackadown, saw houses clustering here beside the river Creedy. Anglo-Saxons, with axes at their belts, and spears in their hands, must have boasted, just as Kirton men now do, of the rich Lord's meadow of Sandford, and that of all the hay in Devonshire, there was no hay like Kirton hay, and of all Kirton hay, no hay like the hay of the Lord's meadow. In that broad pasture stretching down to the Creedy river the red Devons revel, as well they may, on the thick flowers and the fresh juicy grass.

Crediton was the birthplace of one of the greatest of the Saxon saints, Winfred—better known as St. Boniface—the first preacher of Christianity in central Germany, and the founder of the famous monastery at Fulda, in Hesse Cassell. This saint, educated at Exeter, travelled to Rome, received a commission from Pope Gregory the Second in 719, and then went as a missionary into Bavaria and Norway, and preached Christianity amid the forests to the half savage hunters of those early ages. On his return to Rome he was made first bishop to the Archbishop of Germany, still preaching among the wild tribes, and founding churches whenever the worshippers of Thor would permit him. He built the Abbey of Fulda, in 746, but, still untiring, bravely left his abatial splendour to plunge again among the savage Germans, and venturing into Friesland was slain with all his monks and cross bearers in the summer of 755. His works fill a dusty shelf still in old ecclesiastical libraries. Boniface was a great pioneer of civilisation among the German forests, and the fellow-countrymen of Luther owe him gratitude. This Devonshire martyr is the patron saint of innkeepers (probably in his travels the worthy man learned to value a good hotel, and on his return perhaps established an inn or two) and hence his worship by the class. For several hundred years after his martyrdom Crediton, then famous for woollen manufactures (now driven out by shoemaking), remained the seat of the Devonshire bishops.

In 1549, when the Roman Catholic peasantry broke out into rebellion, and bore the crucifix aloft through many a Devonshire town, the rebels gathering, too, at Crediton, built up a great barricade of carts, timber, and stones at the town's end, and fortified some barns adjoining. Sir Peter and Sir Jarvais Carew, riding from Exeter with a score or two of lances, desired to "have speech of the rebels," but, being denied access, dashed at the barricade, and either set the barns on fire, or compelled the

rebels to burn them to prevent their being held against them. The rebels after this always took "the barns of Crediton" as their rallying cry.

The church at Crediton, in 1315, was the scene of one of those spurious miracles contrived in the middle ages to rouse the zeal of the country people. The bishops of Exeter used to reside here, and preside in the collegiate church over the stalls filled with stately rows of eighteen canons and eighteen vicars. In August, 1315, at the feast of St. Peter ad Vincula, while Bishop Walter Stapledon (afterwards torn to pieces by a London mob) was celebrating mass, a blind man, who had been praying far away from the splendour, glitter, and perfume of the central altar, before a side shrine of St. Nicholas, suddenly recovered his sight. Some temporary attack of ophthalmia had at last passed away. The cry of "a miracle! a miracle!" passed from worshipper to worshipper, till it reached the bishop, who instantly held a chapter in the Lady Chapel, proclaimed it as a *bonâ fide* miracle, and ordered the bells to instantly clash out a thanksgiving. The man was a fuller, of Keynsham, who had lost his sight in the previous Easter week, and had dreamt that he would be cured if he should visit the Church of the Holy Cross at Crediton.

In the south chancel aisle is the altar tomb of Sir John Sully, a knight who fought up and down Picardy, Saxony, and Spain, side by side with the Black Prince, and, in spite of storms of sword strokes, thousands of spear thrusts, rains of arrows, and many smashing experiences among maces and war hammers, lived till he was upwards of one hundred and five, and was then left here calmly to his rest; and on the north side of the chancel Sir William Peryam, a chief baron of the Exchequer of Elizabeth's time, sleeps near him.

Now to the ivied bastion of old Rougemont the crow bears right on, and from the ruined citadel of Exeter surveys the grand old cathedral, the great carved tomb of so many illustrious dead, and the twenty-one tributary parish churches. Julius Cæsar, who is said to have built the Tower of London, is reported to have set his hands to work at masonry here also. It is supposed that some of the Saxon kings next inhabited Rougemont, and issued from thence their fiery menaces to the rival potentates of Dorsetshire and Wiltshire, and the hostile Britons of Berkshire. Then came the Dukes of Cornwall, one of whom figures in King Lear, and of whom the less said the better, history being rather oblivious about that branch of the early English peerage. The rough conqueror came here, too, swearing his great oath, "Fulgore Dei," and beat at the gates of Rougemont. He altered the castle to show his power, and then gave it to the first Earl of Devon, the husband of his niece Albreda. In Stephen's troubled reign (one long battle indeed), the king attacked it, and burnt the outer works, and so tormented the garrison with fire that they had to empty all their wine

casks to help to extinguish the flames. In the reign of Henry the Fourth, John Holland, Duke of Exeter, dwelt at Rougemont, which is, however, chiefly interesting to the crow and his flighty friends from the fact that Shakespeare mentions a tradition concerning it.

The Crookback came here once with his army, and shuddered at being told the name of the castle, as an Irish prophet had predicted that he should not live long after seeing Richmond.

Richmond! when last I was in Exeter,
The mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,
And call'd it Rouge-mont, at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Exeter, looking far away towards the warm green sea that beats upon Devon's red cliffs, was an old British town built long before Cæsar, and called Caer Isc, the city on the river. Antiquaries observe that like most Celtic trading towns it has been built for safety just beyond where the river ceases to be navigable. Coins of the Greek dynasties in Syria and Egypt prove that Phœnician merchants must have come here many hundred years before Christ to trade for Cornish and Dartmoor tin. Then the Romans marched in and made it a great station. Lastly the Saxons fortified the town on the Exe, and traded here with the Britons from across the Tamar. The Exe was the frontier then for the Damnonians, but Athelstan came and drove them pell mell into Cornwall, and rebuilt the walls of Exeter. The Britons cooped up among the granite rocks of Cornwall soon had their avengers; the Danes came crowding up the Exe with their black sails and black banners, and wintered at Exeter in 876, rejoicing in the Saxon beeves and ale. They grew accustomed to the place and pillaged it again under Sweyn in 1003. The old red tower was always getting beaten about by stones from military engines, and chipped by crossbow bolts. William the Conqueror besieged it, wishing to sieze Githa, the mother of Harold, and her daughter, but they escaped safely to Bruges. Perkin Warbeck, when joined by the Bodmin men, and calling himself Richard the Fourth, besieged Exeter, but unsuccessfully, and flying from the king's troops to Taunton, took refuge in the New Forest. Soon afterwards surrendering himself, but broke prison, and was hung at Tyburn.

Exeter had its share of troubles in the civil wars. Prince Maurice took it after an eight months' siege, and then it became the king's great stronghold in the west; for he was always popular in Devonshire and Cornwall, and the proud queen resided at Exeter, and kept the nobles loyal to the flag. There she gave birth to that princess Henrietta, afterwards the Duchess of Orleans, who was eventually poisoned, and on whom Bossuet preached one of his sublimest funeral sermons. The Prince of Orange made a formal entry into the fair capital of the west on his way to take possession of King James's crown, and in 1789 old King George and Queen Charlotte

were received by the mayor and aldermen, to the delectation of the honest Devonshire people and the sardonic contempt of Peter Pindar. That sneerer, eventually so easily bought off, says:

Mayster may'r, upon my word,
Poked to the king a gert long sword,
Which he poked back agen.

The journey to Exeter, now little more than five hours by express, used to take "old Quick-silver" seventeen or eighteen hours, with horses never off the trot. It was thought wild work at that rate, and our forefathers considered themselves desperadoes who had accomplished great deeds when they stepped out in Fore-street, and congratulated each other at the danger well over. In 1730 a Mrs. Manley, with the spirit of an African traveller, published a book on "A stage-coach journey from London to Exeter." The ponderous vehicle started at three in the morning, stopped at ten in order that the passengers might dine, and at three P.M. coolly retired into an inn-yard to safe moorings for the night. The journey was completed in four days, and the average pace was a safe cozy four and a half miles an hour.

The crow perched complacently in the gable niche of the west front of the grand old cathedral, nestling down, so that he seems a mere black spot from below—a mere black wafer at the feet of crumbling old St. Peter, looks down at the rows of angels, kings, and saints, and croaks applause at the piety of Edward the Third's lord high treasurer, Bishop Brantingham, who, it is supposed, put together these Norman towers, flying buttresses, and lofty sheets of painted glass, all so many episodes of the great poem in stone, hallowed by the beauty of art.

Bishop Stapledon completed the choir in 1308-1326, and the four outermost bays of the choir are his also. His monument is in the choir. A figure of the Saviour is within the canopy, and a small figure of King Edward the Second climbs up towards him. The arms of the see (two keys addorsed) adorn the sleeve of the effigy. This bishop, who founded Exeter College, was left by Edward the Second in charge of London. In 1326, Stapledon, then Lord Treasurer of England, and a firm adherent of the king against the queen and the barons, met with a terrible death. When Isabella landed from France, determined to chase away the Spencers, her husband's favourites, and advanced on London, the weak king fled to the Welsh frontier. The bishop, as custos of the City of London, then demanded the keys of the Lord Mayor, Hammond Chickwell, and determined to curb the restless citizens, took high measures, ready to pounce on the first revolter. The populace equally alert, fearing the mayor's submission, and roused by Isabella's proclamations that had been hung on the new cross at Cheapside, rose in arms, imprisoned the mayor, and seized his keys. They then ran to Exeter House, in what is now Essex-street, Strand, burnt down the gates, and destroyed all the rich plate, jewels, money, and furniture. The

bishop, being at the time in the fields, though almost too proud to show fear, rode straight to the northern door of St. Paul's to take sanctuary. But it was too late. The mob closed round him, tore him off his horse, stripped him of his armour, dragged him, wounded and bleeding, to Cheapside, proclaimed him there a traitor, a seducer of the king, and an enemy of the people's interests, and, chopping off his head, set it on a pole. His disfigured corpse was tossed into a hole in the sand in an old churchyard of the Pied Friars. His brother and some servants were also beheaded, and their bleeding and naked bodies thrown on a heap of rubbish by the river side. The body of the luckless bishop was six months afterwards disinterred, and brought to Exeter for solemn and stately burial by the queen's command.

The towers and steeples of Exeter have many traditions the crow learns as he flits from one to the other, and on the lichened and corroded stones he croaks them in crow language to the chattering starlings, who respect him greatly for his blackness and his age.

Of St. Mary Major's, in the cathedral yard, it is said that the noise of the weathercock so disturbed Catherine of Arragon when she slept in the deanery on her way to London, that it was taken down. St. Mary Steps, in West-street, boasts an ancient clock with three quaint figures, which the townspeople call Matthew the Miller and his two sons (Matthew is really burly Henry the Eighth). The local rhyme about the old horologer's automata is,

Adam and Eve would never believe,
That Matthew the miller was dead,
For every hour in Westgate tower
Old Matthew nods his head.

If Exeter had been a Spanish city we should have had a hundred legends about these figures, the magicians who framed them and the goblins who haunted them. From one of the church towers, after the great rebellion of Edward the Sixth's time, one of the leaders, a vicar, was hung in his priestly robes.

Exeter is justly proud of her children. That humbly wise man, Richard Hooker, the author of the Ecclesiastical Polity, was born at Heavitree, which is a suburb. Tired of disputation, he only prayed to leave all public employment and retire to some quiet parsonage, where he might, to use his own beautiful language, "see God's blessings spring out of the earth and eat his bread in peace and privacy." One of his friends found him, tormented by his shrew of a wife, rocking a cradle while busy studying the Greek Testament. Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of the great Oxford Library, was another worthy son of Exeter. Gandy, the painter, whom Reynolds imitated and whom Kneller admired, was a third. Budgell, Addison's friend, is also on the roll, and Jackson, the composer—Incedon's master. When Incedon was ragingly jealous of Braham he used to say,

"If my dear old master could only come down from heaven and take an Exeter post-

chaise, and come up to town and hear this condemned Jew, he'd soon settle the matter."

The crow lifting from the Exeter roof, now bears swift away to the Tamar and the granite strewn and haunted moors of Cornwall.

FATAL ZERO.

A DIARY KEPT AT HOMBURG : A SHORT SERIAL STORY.

CHAPTER XV.—*Continued.*

ELEVEN O'CLOCK, P.M.—Heaven is very good—too good to me. I go to bed more cheerful. Something drew me into those vile rooms after my wandering about miserable and purposeless; indeed it was to escape from myself during those weary hours. I felt a sort of thrill and sinking at my heart. I drew near and looked at the fatal table; it was another *winning* night, and every one in spirits and excitement, and picking up gold and silver. My trembling fingers were really drawn by an overpowering instinct to my pocket, and, literally without my knowledge, I found I had my only stake in my hand ready to put down. Then there was a new combination. I remarked there was an alternation, a zigzag going backwards and forwards, and taking advantage of this, I was impelled irresistibly to put down. I won, and breathed. I won again, and went on, and have now got back six out of my ten. O, God is very good—too good! I meet Grainger going out.

"Well done," he said. "I saw you, though I did not wish to show myself, for fear of making you nervous. Your moves were bold, and worthy of a general, and your retreat just in time."

"To-morrow I know I shall get back the rest, perhaps more. Even a few louis more would be something, but I should be quite content."

I went back again.

One o'clock P.M.—As I went out of the Kursaal down the steps on to the terrace, I could hardly keep myself from giving a cry. My heart so light, so airy, so bounding, so full of hope. I had to walk round and round those gardens before I could trust myself to sit down calmly, and take out what I had in my pocket. O my sweet darling pieces, there they are on the table before me, all come home to me again, rescued from the vile harpies who would destroy us all, wreck the happiness of families for a single double florin. Let me look again, and set them out on the table before me, eight, nine, ten. Then, again, one, two, three, four, five, and five double florins,

which make six louis, and nearly another louis in single florins, nearly seven louis profit. Nearly the sixth of our rent. O, Heaven is good—too good to me. I do not deserve such bounty; for only think what it would have been had I lost all that! What would have been my state of agony and despair! Safe, rescued, restored, I have done with them now for ever, for ever. Ministers of Mephistopheles, you did your best with me, but you have come out of the fight rather the worse, I think. You had nearly been successful, but you will not find us *all* victims. Some of us are your match. I feel so well and happy, I shall feast royally, that is, treat myself to a little bottle of Hockheimer. I have been so low, I want it.

To-day has quite an air of a festival. I see the singing Diva. The little lady with the marble face and projecting chin is singing, and I think after my victories two or three florins' worth of sweet music will be welcome. I so love music, though not this opera. I had wished for the melodious *Traviata*, often promised and denied by this tricky administration. To-night it is *Crispino*, a sparkling little comic opera, full of pretty tunes, and well suited to the tricks and caprices of the little lady whom we call a Diva, for the lack of a better one. I must say I am a little dazzled by what the administration have done in the way of a theatre. A more gorgeous and elegant little temple of its size it would not be possible to frame. Well filled, charming dresses, and elegant people. I see near me, in the stalls, a little party whom I have noticed often; a young girl, so strangely like my Dora at home, that it makes me start; the same rich dark hair, the same refined turn in the face, the same look of sparkling gaiety and enjoyment which was Dora's attraction, with large heavy Italian earrings that seemed almost Indian in shape. A dull Englishman beside her talked and whispered the whole time, and prevented her attending to the music—I dare say thought he was recommending himself vastly. I could wish she had snubbed him as he deserved. I am in such spirits and shall go out now, have a cup of coffee and chocolate, and then walk about the gardens in the balmy night air, looking up at the illuminated terrace. I have grown quite fond of that pacing up and down in these gardens so late. Such dreams and speculations have floated before me there as I look up to the calm and placid sky over the trees!

—I can almost smile at myself and my *awful* state yesterday. I am far too sensi-

tive, and I am sure if any of these good and proper people here—had they lost money even that did not belong to them—would take it quietly enough. Their withers would not be wrung on such provocation, and they would make some complacent excuses to themselves. Some would say I was scrupulous, too scrupulous; which would be according to their imperfect lights. How can they tell, or what can they know? I pierce deeper, and can tell them it was another matter, some thousand miles away, I was thinking of. It was my Dora and home that was present to me—her dear letter and distresses. "A dark cloud," she wrote, in her graphic style, "which will pass away." This was what was overshadowing me. This unselfish motive, as indeed, without vanity, I may call it. I was not thinking of a trumpery loss, and of such poor contemptible enemies, whose game is in my hands, and who are almost children to me at their own weapons and machinery, which take in a few fools, and them only. And, by the way, how curious the analogy here, even to morals and virtue. What a testimony to the great and good advice, which so often goes in at one ear and out at the other, not to be dispirited at a reverse, but "bide your time." Even to their debasing chicanery that golden rule applies. Valuable lesson, indeed; though I had a distinct idea there could be no doubt about it. There is a uniformity in all these dispensations which applies *universally*; and thus, à la Jacques, we find good in everything.

What a thing the sense of power is! Poor "huckaback" minds of the common cheap pattern, never can look beyond the immediate moment. Defeat or repulse for a time is with them defeat for ever. *They* cannot understand the masterly policy of retreat preparatory to an advance—the "*reculer pour mieux sauter*." The timid and ignorant dabbler in the funds sells on a fall; the spirited speculator holds and buys more. So with your common vulgar players, who fly disheartened by a loss. The rascals who hold the tables know this well. They thought I would have done the same. I am tempted to try and give them a lesson once and for ever. It would be a bit of triumph to show them *my* skill fairly, and I do not see that I am bound to show them any quarter. They would have shown *me* none yesterday. Our government gives the criminal no quarter, and takes his spoil from him. I dare say when I

go home and tell my story, I shall have to meet reproaches, and even a wounded surprise from Dora. "If you could do all this I think a few pounds for our pressing necessities could have been no great sin." No great sin! Certainly not, my pet; and your gentle soul is scarcely trained enough to appreciate these niceties. The example is something; but you would hardly follow me if I said that by way of *punishment* to them it would be no such harm.

With light heart I went in again. I saw a ruefulness and distrust in the pinched face of M. B. He knew that I knew him and his ways. He knew, too—for these men note the most trifling incidents of the day—that I had got back from them everything they had tricked me out of, and more. I could see the mortification in his eyes. Studying the game more carefully, it is amazing what fresh lights and instincts break in on me. If I had but time I could develop the whole into a science, whose certainty and accuracy would be assured. But your pedant, even if he knew its rules, would infallibly break down; because, like the skilful general, there are moments when you must fling away rule and trust to instinct—a glorious instinct, quite as infallible. I felt it all to-day, and scarcely ever was at fault. The strangest "power" I see is that of Zero, and there is one man present, who I admit, has some of this instinct with a true knowledge of the laws and seasons that relate to this Zero. I see too plainly the most amazing results could be obtained. . . . I am half provoked with myself for not obeying the silent supernatural invitations I received a dozen times to-day—it is like flinging away the blessings of nature, ever bountiful. If they challenge me in this way so persistently—well, before I go, a few minutes—as an experiment—

Midnight.—O wretched, miserable, weak fool, I deserve it all, every bit of it! It was blind, cursed folly, and madness! O, what is to become of me now? All gone! All this money—I don't know how much, and what does it matter now? O, I must hold my very heart—I cannot breathe. O wicked, wicked, vile scoundrel! What am I to do? Nothing left—all gone—and I cannot fly from this place! O den of thieves and worse than murderers, you have undone me at last! Let me see, now, let me turn out these pockets. Yes, five, six florins, and three wretched kreutzers;

and one—yes, and another—just two napoleons left. O you fool, you base, mean, pitiful scoundrel! What is to become of me now? Their devilish seduction—letting me win at first, then a little loss, and that desperate doubling to get all back! My brains, my wits, all fled, and I saw nothing but the cursed green board. If I had had a hundred more it must have followed, for it was a necessity I should get it back. O, it will never come back, and I am ruined and disgraced for ever. Let me die. I cannot show my face.

Thus the whole of that day went by—I, with a sort of restless demon locked up in me, which would not allow me to remain quiet three minutes in one position. If I sit for a few minutes, flutter, flutter, begins every nerve in my whole system. My heart throbs as if from machinery, and the only thing, it seems, that can save me, is to leap up and walk—walk furiously, in any direction. Passing by objects swiftly, —trees, men, and women—that gives me a relief, that headlong motion disturbs the beat of the pendulum, and whirling wheels. I have not time to think from the physical action. Oh, such a long, long day! O the leaden wings of the hours dragging on like the foreshadowed eternity! . . . I dared not go near that terrible red-stone palace. I shrank from it as from a burning furnace, whose glow spread for half a mile round—from itself, from its gardens, from the very look, seen so far off. I was carrying the raging glowing embers of a stove within me. Oh, the miles I paced up and down and round those streets, something drawing me, and I struggling against the influence, to the red sandstone palace.

But at last the noon was past—the evening came; and then I knew the lamps had been brought in *there*, and the true business begun. The brigands and ruffians who had stopped me and pillaged me, had other prey now. Oh, those hours!—then the night! . . .

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S FAREWELL READINGS.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read at St. James's Hall, London, February 16; Glasgow, February 18; Edinburgh, February 19; Glasgow, February 22; Edinburgh, February 24; Glasgow, February 25; Edinburgh, February 26; St. James's Hall, London, March 2; Wolverhampton, March 4; Manchester, March 6 and 8; Hull, March, 10; York, March 11; Hull, March 12.

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